2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



as a unit of Mbuti hunters sharing and recognizing a common hunting territory.[2] No matter what group the band falls under, the definition holds. The territory is clearly defined by natural boundaries, though the law of trespass depends somewhat on the location of the home band within its territory at the moment of trespass. The boundaries, though fixed, are under certain circumstances capable of penetration without causing offense.

The composition of the band is fluid, to say the least, and does not follow any clear unilineal or cognatic descent system. Throughout the forest, the bands are in a constant state of fragmentation as well as in a constant process of fission and fusion. Members of any band are quite likely at any moment to leave and join another band, temporarily or permanently, for any one of a number of reasons. In-law visiting is common, and permanent attachments to the band are sometimes accomplished this way. But at the same time, with each successive, monthly change of site, the hunting camp also shows another stage in the over-all process of fission and fusion along recognizable lines of structural cleavage. At certain times of the year, different for net-hunters and archers, the band splits up into a number of smaller sub-bands, all still hunting within the same over-all territory, but as independent units.

It has generally been stated, sometimes citing the apparent lack of an Mbuti language as an example, that the Mbuti are a people without a culture of their own, adopting the culture of their villager neighbors just as they adopt their language. A superficial look at a hunting society, with its lack of easily recognizable social institutions, might seem to confirm that opinion. There is no chieftainship, no council of elders, but sometimes an individual who assumes the villager title of *sultani* or *capita*. There is no legal system supported by effective or formal supernatural sanctions. There is an evident lack of any kinship system except an apparently slavish imitation of the villager clan and lineage system, whereby certain individuals related through the principle of patrilineal descent recognize a common ancestor and symbolize their unity by the respect of a common totem. Any attempt to integrate this system with other institutions, indigenous or adopted,

[2] Throughout, except where otherwise specified, I use the term "band" in this sense of a unit that is primarily territorial. It is essentially composed of peoples bound together by bonds other than lineage. Insofar as affines are an important part of any band, and affinal relationships as important in most respects as lineal relationships, the band cannot even be defined as cognatic or bilateral without qualification stressing its ad-hoc nature.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



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law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent specialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or [858] no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy
627 life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operat-
681 ing as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to